



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of entry 01/12/2023

[REDACTED] Sledge, approximately 65 years old, residing at [REDACTED], Hampton, Virginia 23669, telephone [REDACTED]-3-5269, was interviewed at his residence. After being advised of the identities of the interviewing agents and the nature of the interview, Sledge provided the following information:

Sledge has a concrete company called Master Crete and Sons. In July of 2020, Sledge was contacted by a homeowner named [first name unknown, or FNU] Bowman, who lives on 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Newport News, Virginia. Bowman advised Sledge that he (Bowman) hired a man named David Merryman to do his driveway, and had paid Merryman between \$3000 and \$3500 already to do it, but Merryman had "torn up [Bowman's] yard," and not done any of the work on the driveway.

Bowman and his wife did some online research on David Merryman, and found out that Merryman had a history of racist aggression, including using racial slurs against public officials and others, and "running down boys" in his truck. Bowman gave Sledge the printouts from Bowman's online research, and told Sledge he did not want Merryman to do the driveway work.

Sledge did the work on Bowman's driveway. He had to "start from scratch" on the job. On or about 7/8/20, Sledge got a call from phone number 757-435-2700 [investigator's note: 757-435-2700 is a phone number known to be associated with David Merryman]. The caller identified himself as David Merryman. In an irate tone, Merryman told Sledge "you stole my job, nigger," and threatened "I'm going to kill your ass and take you to court, nigger." Merryman reiterated multiple times "I'm going to kill you," and referred to Sledge as a "nigger" multiple times during the course of Merryman's phone call, which Sledge ended by hanging up.

Merryman got Sledge's number through mutual contacts at Rappahannock Concrete.

In light of Merryman's death threats, Sledge attempted to take out a protective order against Merryman. Sledge initially spoke to a uniformed Hampton Police Division (HPD) officer named Beacham. Officer Beacham told Sledge he (Beacham) would handle the matter, but HPD kept giving Sledge "the

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runaround." Sledge ultimately attended four court appointments, and took Bowman to each of these appointments as a witness, but Merryman never showed up for any of the appointments, and the courts "discontinued" the case. Bowman told Sledge that he (Bowman) would not go to any more court appointments, and Sledge heard that Merryman had never been served with the summons. Sledge did get a protective order against Merryman.

At about 4 PM on 3/2/21, Sledge was working at a house on Shell Road. Merryman showed up in an unmarked truck. Sledge had never met Merryman face to face until that time, but Sledge recognized Merryman both from the online research Bowman had given him, and from seeing Merryman's work trucks in the area. Merryman was conversing with others who were at the work site, but Sledge was on his knees doing some concrete work, and was not paying any attention to what Merryman was doing. When Sledge realized that Merryman was at the location in violation of the protective order, Sledge contacted HPD. HPD Officer Wartens responded, and Sledge showed the interviewing agents Wartens' report, identified as HPD report #21-0302-024. Merryman left the scene when the police showed up, but then later came back and was talking to the police officers. Sledge could not understand why the police did not arrest Merryman at the scene, as Merryman was in clear violation of the protective order. Sledge understands that HPD later went to Merryman's house to arrest him, but they did not take Merryman into custody because "Merryman refused to come to the door." Given Sledge's perception that HPD failed to perform their duties properly, the runaround he received when he first reported Merryman's threats, and the difficulties he has experienced with the court processes, Sledge remains very frustrated by the law enforcement response to his concerns.

Sledge knows other people who have received racist threats from Merryman. There was a man named FNU Johnson who lived near Merryman's house on Chesapeake Avenue. Merryman tore up Johnson's yard, and Merryman called Johnson a "nigger." Merryman also called Bowman a "nigger." Bowman has a truck with a hunting dog cage in the back. Bowman was driving on the interstate after moving the driveway job from Merryman to Sledge. Merryman was also driving on the interstate, saw Bowman's truck, and knew it was Bowman because of the dog cage. Merryman gave Bowman "the middle finger" then tried to run Bowman off the highway with his (Merryman's) dump truck.

The property behind Bowman's house is owned by Merryman. There was a woman living there who was in a wheelchair. Merryman boarded that house up with the woman inside it. Bowman's phone number is [REDACTED]

A man named FNU Carter rented a commercial space on Kecoughtan from Merryman. Sledge could not remember the cross street, but said it was "close

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to the 7-11." Carter ran a barber shop out of the building. Carter asked Merryman to fix a water leak. Merryman called carter a "nigger" as well. Carter is deceased. Sledge and Carter attended church together.